[TFR 297 is a letter to the Editor of "Ukraine and the World", from a Ukrainian citizen]

Greetings dear chief of the TV program "Ukraine and the World " I watched two of your programs and thought, "Why I, too, may be able to somehow help in the search for 'captive' Americans "

It was in the spring (or fall) of 1948 or 1949 Our air division was based at one of the former German airfields near Koenings burg As prescribed in the PVO, duty flights (of four aircraft each) were assigned by the fighter regiments On that cloudy day my aircraft and I had to sit at the start line [of the the cockpit, and I, the aircraft mechanic, beneath the wing of the aircraft) It was announced over the start line that once again the airfield was under approach by an American "Flying

Reviewed by DPMO
IAW 50 USC 435 Note & DOD 5400 7-R
Date 12Aug99 Initials HCS

Fortress" B-25 Our fighters had been hunting it for an entire week, but the cunning Americans gave them the slip every time Later they became insolent and, coming out of the clouds, started photographing our division hardstands A short time after those visits we "were acquainted" with the Colorado Beetle several containers were dropped in Lithuania and near us close to Koeningsburg (since that time the beetle has brought the entire former Soviet Union to its knees) The Americans knew that we would not be able to take off from our grassy airfields after pouring rains - this is why they conducted themselves so fearlessly over our airfields

But on that day, or more accurately, morning, the frost thoroughly froze our

sprawling take-off strip At the signal of the red flare, our four LA-11 aircraft taxied out to the start line and took off Shortly thereafter, we heard the familiar rumbling of the motors of the "Fortress" from behind the thick cloud cover We, the mechanics, sat at the start line near the mobile radio station and listened to what was occurring behind the clouds the flight leader informed the division commander that he had observed the violating aircraft and that the entire flight was approaching it from behind in order to force it to land at our airfield They went behind the clouds and several machine guns began to rap The flight leader reported that the tail gunners of the "Fortress" had opened fire He then reported that the "Fortress" did not want to comply with our demand to land and was departing in the direction of

[cut off], they were flying nap-of-the-earth and the altitude was not great when they "destroyed" the enemy (a former ally from the Second World War) All personnel who had fallen into the sea ended up with inflatable life vests, and our pilots saw them as they were swimming, removing their parachute harnesses

What was the subsequent fate of the crew of the B-25? Is it possible that they ended up in Siberia or in the northern Urals?

The fate of our pilots, having successfully repulsed the "enemy" the wing commander and three other pilots (four people in all) flew out after a few days for Moscow in the very same LA-11s, where they received the Order of the Combat Red Banner (different than that which they received for their service in battle against the Germans) Soon this case was reported

in the central newspapers It was reported that the violating aircraft "escaped to the sea" The newspapers then reported about the awarding of combat decorations for service to the Motherland to the pilots of our unit At that time, those decorations were not connected with [the aircraft which] "escaped to the sea", but we knew

It's possible that those pilots who "battled" in the sky of Koeningsburg a few years after the Second World War are still alive, not to mention those who they fished out of the cold water of the Baltic Sea, and then

What occurred later, and to where they disappeared will apparently never be established

Respectfully Yours,

[signature]

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